



## Technical Bulletin

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### **Manual Washing of Clear and Tinted (Non-reflective Coated) Glass**

#### ***Summary***

Glass needs to be periodically washed to remove visible dirt, and to prevent accumulations of dirt from bonding to, or attacking, the surface. Glass should be cleaned as frequently as is needed to keep its appearance acceptable. In some locations, and for some building owners, this cleaning will be more frequent than for others.

Glass is very durable when exposed to normal atmospheric conditions, but alkaline solutions, and some acids, can damage it. Cleaning materials from other parts of a building, or leaching and efflorescence from concrete, bricks and mortar, or run-off from oxidizing steel, can be particularly harmful. (Good drip detail in framing design can minimize such run-off concentrations). For this reason it is important to prevent any visible accumulation of deposits from remaining on the glass surface where they can slowly attack it.

Some deposits may not be directly harmful in themselves but by retaining moisture they can cause glass staining and etching. Other deposits may cause damage indirectly simply by being so firmly attached to the glass that it is damaged by the overly aggressive cleaning actions needed to remove the deposits.

When cleaning glass, note that there is usually a layer of abrasive dust resting lightly on the surface. The abrasiveness of this dust can easily scratch the glass if too much pressure is applied with too little cleaning solution.

Proprietary window cleaning liquids, or dishwashing liquid detergents, such as Joy, Ivory or Dawn in low concentrations (10 to 15 drops per 3 to 4 gallons) can be used as cleaning solutions.

Dried paint splashes on glass can be removed with paint solvents, followed by detergent and water washing, taking care that the solvents do not damage glazing materials and the frame. Careful use of the flat edge, not the corner, of a new safety razor blade can be used to remove paint drops from plain,

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non-coated, annealed glass. Razor blades or any metallic scraper should not be used on heat strengthened or fully tempered glass, or coatings on glass, as fine scratches which are only visible in full sunlight can be created.

***Recommended Procedure for Manually Cleaning Glass:***

- Commence cleaning as soon as the glass is visibly dirty.
- Avoid cleaning heat absorbing tinted glasses in direct sunlight, as the glass will be excessively hot for optimum cleaning.
- Flood the surface with water or cleaning solution to remove loose dust and grit.
- Hand wipe with clean wet cloths, using an approved detergent solution, until the glass is visibly clean.
- Rinse with clean water.
- Dry immediately with a clean lint-free cloth or squeegee. Do not allow metal squeegee holders to touch the glass surface.

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